Justice Interruptus

Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition

Nancy Fraser

JUSTICE INTERRUPTUS

This page intentionally left blank

JUSTICE INTERRUPTUS

Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition

Nancy Fraser

Routledge
New York & London

Published in 1997 by

Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park,
Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Published in Great Britain by

Routledge
270 Madison Ave,
New York NY 10016

Transferred to Digital Printing 2009

The author gratefully ackowledges permission to reprint previously published material here. Chapter 1 originally appeared in *New Left Review,* July/August 1995, no. 212: 68–93. An earlier version of chapter 2 appeared as "After the Family Wage: Gender Equity and the Welfare State," in *Political Theory* 22, no. 4 (November 1994): 591–618, © Sage Publications, reprinted by permission. An earlier version of chapter 3 originally appeared in *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991). An earlier version of chapter 4 appeared in *Critical Inquiry* 18 (spring 1992): 595–612, © University of Chicago Press, reprinted by permission. Chapter 5 originally appeared in *Signs* 19, no. 2 (winter 1994): 309–336. An earlier version of chapter 6 appeared as "The Uses and Abuses of French Discourse Theories for Feminist Politics," *boundary 2,* 17, no. 2 (summer 1990): 82–101. An earlier version of chapter 7 appeared as "Multiculturalism and Gender Equity: The U.S. 'Difference' Debates Revisited," *Constellations* 3, no. 1 (April 1996): 61–72. An earlier version of chapter 8 appeared as "Recognition or Redistribution? A Critical Reading of Iris Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference,*" *Journal of Political Philosophy* 3, no. 2 (June 1995): 166–180. An earlier version of chapter 9 appeared in *Praxis International* 11, no. 2 (July 1991): 166–177. An earlier version of chapter 10 appeared in *Social Text,* winter 1993, no. 37: 173–181.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fraser, Nancy.
Justice interruptus : critical reflections on the "postsocialist" condition / by Nancy Fraser.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-415-91794-8 (hb). — ISBN 0-415-91795-6 (pb)
1. Justice. 2. Distributive justice. 3. Culture conflict.
I. Title.
JC578.F73 1996
320'.01'1—dc20 96-41608
CIP

Publisher's Note

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original may be apparent.

For Eli

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

Part III. Feminist Interventions

Acknowledgments

Research for material included in this book was supported by the American Council of Learned Societies; the Newberry Library; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research at Northwestern University; the Rockefeller Foundation Study and Conference Center, Bellagio, Italy; the *Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen,* Vienna; the Humanities Research Institute, University of California, Irvine; and the Graduate Faculty of The New School for Social Research. I am grateful to the staff and administrators of all of these institutions, as well as to Cornelia Klinger, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, and Judith Friedlander.

Many individuals read portions of this book in draft and/or discussed its ideas with me; I have acknowledged them in the notes to each chapter. But I owe thanks of a more overarching sort to Jane Mansbridge, Linda Nicholson, Judith Wittner, and Eli Zaretsky, who stimulated me and supported me more than they know. Thanks as well to Linda Gordon, who graciously allowed me to include our coauthored essay, "A Genealogy of 'Dependency'," and to Maureen MacGrogan, for editorial guidance and support.

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

Justice Interruptus

Taken together, the essays collected here diagnose the "postsocialist" condition. I use this expression—with apologies to Jean-François Lyotard—to designate the general horizon within which political thought necessarily moves today.[1] I place the term "postsocialist" in quotation marks, however, to signal the effort to maintain a critical posture in relation to this horizon, despite being situated within it. I aim, in other words, not to reflect the "postsocialist" condition symptomatically, but rather to reflect on it critically.

What, then, is the "postsocialist" condition? Scarcely a definitive negative verdict on the relevance and viability of socialist ideals, it is, rather, a skeptical mood or structure of feeling that marks the post-1989 state of the Left. Fraught with a sense of "the morning after," this mood expresses authentic doubts bound to genuine opacities concerning the historical possibilities for progressive social change. Yet it is laced as well with ideological elements, which are difficult to disentangle and name. To begin to sort out the authentic from the ideological, I distinguish three constitutive features of the "postsocialist" condition.

The first is the absence of any credible progressive vision of an alternative to the present order. This, of course, is partly a matter of the increased delegitimation, in the wake of 1989, of socialism in the broad sense. What has collapsed, in other words, is not just a set of (erstwhile) actually existing institutional arrangements but belief in the principal ideal that inspired

struggles for social transformation for the last century and a half. The immediate consequence is what Jürgen Habermas has called "the exhaustion of [leftwing] utopian energies."[2] The phrase is apt, I believe, despite the impressive proliferation of differentiated progressive activisms currently in evidence throughout the world. It signals that, for the present, at least, no new comprehensive progressive vision of a just social order has emerged to take socialism's place. Proposals to elevate "radical democracy" and "multiculturalism" to that status express the desire in some quarters for such a vision. But they lack the power to convince, I contend, because they bracket the question of political economy. The same holds for the still more anemic notions of "political liberalism" and "communitarianism."

Of course, the current absence of utopian vision scarcely vindicates Francis Fukuyama's shallow claim that 1989 represents "the end of history"[3]; there is no reason to believe it will last. But it does characterize our situation. For the time being at least, progressive struggles are no longer anchored in any credible vision of an alternative to the present order. Political critique, accordingly, is under pressure to curtail its ambitions and remain "oppositional." In a sense, then, we are flying blind.

The second constitutive feature of the "postsocialist" condition concerns a shift in the grammar of political claims-making. Claims for the recognition of group difference have become intensely salient in the recent period, at times eclipsing claims for social equality. This phenomenon can be observed at two levels. Empirically, of course, we have seen the rise of "identity politics," the decentering of class, and, until very recently, the corresponding decline of social democracy.[4] More deeply, however, we are witnessing an apparent shift in the political imaginary, especially in the terms in which justice is imagined. Many actors appear to be moving away from a socialist political imaginary, in which the central problem of justice is redistribution, to a "postsocialist" political imaginary, in which the central problem of justice is recognition. With this shift, the most salient social movements are no longer economically defined "classes" who are struggling to defend their "interests," end "exploitation," and win "redistribution." Instead, they are culturally defined "groups" or "communities of value" who are struggling to defend their "identities," end "cultural domination," and win "recognition." The result is a decoupling of cultural politics from social politics, and the relative eclipse of the latter by the former.

Here, interlaced with historical developments, we encounter currents of "postsocialist" ideology. Some celebrate the shift "from redistribution to recognition" as if struggles for distributive justice were no longer relevant. Others bemoan the decentering of class, which they equate with the decline

of egalitarian economic claims, as if struggles for racial and gender justice were "merely cultural" and not also addressed to distribution. Together, such responses construct what appears to be an either/or choice: class politics or identity politics? social politics or cultural politics? equality or difference? redistribution or recognition? The implication is that these are mutually exclusive alternatives, that we must choose between social equality and multiculturalism, that redistribution and recognition cannot be combined.

These, I maintain, are false antitheses, which I challenge throughout this book. They have structured an increasingly bitter split between "the social left" and "the cultural left" in the United States, a split that recently erupted in the *Social Text* hoax.[5] While one side insists in retrograde accents that "it's the economy, stupid," the other retorts in hypersophisticated tones that "it's the culture, stupid." Both thus evade what I take to be the crucial "postsocialist" tasks: first, interrogating the distinction between culture and economy; second, understanding how both work together to produce injustices; and third, figuring out how, as a prerequisite for remedying injustices, claims for recognition can be integrated with claims for redistribution in a comprehensive political project.

The context for these developments, and the third defining feature of the "postsocialist" condition, is a resurgent economic liberalism. As the center of political gravity seems to shift from redistribution to recognition, and egalitarian commitments appear to recede, a globalizing wall-to-wall capitalism is increasingly marketizing social relations, eroding social protections, and worsening the life-chances of billions. The United Nations reports in 1996 that inequality is rising sharply worldwide, as those who are positioned to prosper in the global information economy rapidly leave behind the many more who are not. In virtually every country in the world, the disparities mount—not only in income and wealth, but also in "capabilities" as measured by access to clean water and air; education, contraception, and health care; paid work and nutritious food; freedom from torture and rape.[6]

This, then, is the "postsocialist" condition: an absence of any credible overarching emancipatory project despite the proliferation of fronts of struggle; a general decoupling of the cultural politics of recognition from the social politics of redistribution; and a decentering of claims for equality in the face of aggressive marketization and sharply rising material inequality.

The "postsocialist" condition is also the horizon of contemporary political theorizing. Thus, it is crucial for theorists to ask: what constitutes a critical stance in this context? How can we distinguish those postures that critically interrogate the "postsocialist" condition from those that reflect it symptomatically?

It is a basic premise of the chapters that follow that all three constitutive features of the "postsocialist" condition need to be subject to critical scrutiny. This means, first, cultivating some skeptical distance from the fashionable "postsocialist" distrust of normative, programmatic, "totalizing" thinking. To eschew such thinking in the present context, whether in the name of "deconstruction," "postmodernism," or "piecemeal reformism," is symptomatically to express, rather than critically to interrogate, the current "exhaustion of [leftwing] utopian energies." It is to make a virtue out of what appears to be a necessity, instead of subjecting it to the pressure of critique.

Nor is it sufficient merely to speak abstractly of the need for "coalition," as is common today in U.S. multicultural circles. Such discussion is usually aimed at promoting additive combinations among already formed constituencies. Obscuring the social processes whereby constituencies are formed, it surrenders the possibility of an integrative prespective that seeks to grasp, and transform, the social whole. "Coalition politics" remains at the level of wishful thinking, moreover, in the absence of sustained, integrative, and holistic attempts to envision social arrangements that could transform the identities and harmonize the interests of diverse, currently fragmented constituencies.

In contrast to such approaches, a critical perspective must defend the possibility and desirability of comprehensive, integrative, normative, programmatic thinking. It must diagnose the general "postsocialist" retreat from such thinking in recent political culture and lay the conceptual groundwork for redressing it. To be sure, we are not now in a position to envision a full-scale successor project to socialism. But we can try nevertheless to conceive provisional alternatives to the present order that could supply a basis for a progressive politics.

A second imperative is to demystify "postsocialist" ideologies concerning the shift from redistribution to recognition. It should be axiomatic that no defensible successor project to socialism can simply jettison the commitment to social equality in favor of cultural difference. To assume otherwise is effectively to fall in line with the reigning neoliberal commonsense. This is not to say, however, that one should cling to socialist orthodoxy and eschew the politics of recognition altogether. On the contrary, critical theorists should rebut the claim that we must make an either/or choice between the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition. We should aim instead to identify the emancipatory dimensions of both problematics and to integrate them into a single, comprehensive framework. The goal, in short, should be to create another "postsocialism," one that incorporates, rather than repudiates, the best of socialism.

It follows, too, that a critical approach must challenge one-sided, wholesale dismissals of the politics of recognition. Such dismissals are often expressed today as rejections of "identity politics," a phrase that is subject to much abuse. It is paradigmatically associated with claims for national, regional, ethnic and religious recognition, some of which, to be sure, are genuinely pernicious. Yet in the United States today, the expression "identity politics" is increasingly used as a derogatory synonym for feminism, anti-racism, and anti-heterosexism. The implication is that the inherent thrust of such politics is a particularistic self-assertion that rejects the universalism of "common dreams"[7] and has nothing to do with justice. In fact, however, those movements arose in the first place precisely to protest the disguised particularisms—the masculinism, the white-Anglo ethnocentrism, the heterosexism—lurking behind what parades as universal. As such, they have everything to do with justice. These movements assume the guise of identity politics only under certain conditions, moreover, namely, when political currents that look to socioeconomic transformation as the remedy for gender, sexual, and racial-ethnic injustice are eclipsed by currents that look instead to the assertion and vindication of group identity.[8] Only in that case, as in the case of national and ethnic struggles, does a "postsocialist" stress on cultural difference displace the characteristic "socialist" stress on social equality.

Thus, a critical approach must reject facile dismissals that throw out the baby with the bath. Instead, it must develop a critical theory of recognition, distinguishing those claims for the recognition of difference that advance the cause of social equality from those that retard or undermine it.

This in turn requires challenging the current "postsocialist" decoupling of cultural politics from social politics, both practically and intellectually. In the U.S. academy today, cultural theorizing is largely dissociated from social theorizing, thus mirroring in intellectual life the practical decoupling of the politics of recognition from the politics of redistribution in social life. Within the discipline of political philosophy, for example, theorists of distributive justice tend simply to ignore identity politics, apparently assuming that it represents false consciousness. And theorists of recognition tend likewise to ignore distribution, as if the problematic of cultural difference had nothing to with that of social equality. Both parties, therefore, fail to interrogate the dissociation of political economy and culture that is a hallmark of the "postsocialist" condition.

A critical approach must be "bivalent," in contrast, integrating the social and the cultural, the economic and the discursive. This means exposing the limitations of fashionable neostructuralist models of discourse analysis that

dissociate "the symbolic order" from the political economy. It requires cultivating in their stead alternative models that connect the study of signification to institutions and social structures. Finally, it means connecting the theory of cultural justice with the theory of distributive justice.

The essays collected here attempt to develop such a critical approach. Their guiding assumption is that the cultural politics of recognition ought not simply to supplant the social politics of redistribution. Rather, the two need to be integrated with one another.

The chapters in Part One focus directly on the theory of justice. Chapter 1, "From Redistribution to Recognition?", argues that neither redistribution alone nor recognition alone can suffice for remedying injustice in today's world. It proposes a critical theory of recognition that identifies, and supports, only those forms of identity politics that can be coherently combined with a politics of social equality. And it identifies the dilemmas that arise when we try to pursue both redistribution and recognition simultaneously. Chapter 2, "After the Family Wage," examines such dilemmas with regard to gender and the welfare state. It exposes the limitations of two competing feminist visions of postindustrial gender justice, one aiming to make women "workers" like men, the other aiming to "make difference costless." And it sketches the outlines of a third approach that would integrate redistribution and recognition by deconstructing gender and changing men.

Part Two lays some groundwork for such an integration at the level of the theory of discourse. Surveying some of the main varieties of discourse analysis, I identify those approaches best suited to overcoming the current decoupling of the cultural from the social. Chapters 3 and 4 assess the potential of public-sphere theory to provide a hinge between the discursive and the institutional: "Rethinking the Public Sphere" identifies the insights and blindspots of Habermas's model and proposes a critical reconstruction; "Sex, Lies, and the Public Sphere" tests the revised model by analyzing the 1992 Clarence Thomas–Anita Hill confrontation as a struggle to define the line between the public and the private. Chapter 5, in contrast, seeks to remedy the social-structural deficits of Foucauldian genealogy by marrying it to Raymond Williams's cultural-materialism. Coauthored with Linda Gordon and titled "A Genealogy of 'Dependency'," this chapter situates the changing meanings of that "keyword" in relation to changing configurations of political economy so as to challenge current neoliberal ideology. Finally, chapter 6, "Structuralism or Pragmatics?", exposes the limitations of "Lacanianism," a neostructuralist model embraced by many feminists. Contending that "Lacanianism" reifies

"the symbolic order" and dissociates it from political economy, this chapter defends the pragmatics tradition of discourse analysis as better able to connect the study of signification to the study of social inequality.

Part Three carries the project of integrating cultural politics and social politics into current debates in feminist theory. Chapter 7, "Multiculturalism, Antiessentialism, and Radical Democracy," charts the progressive uncoupling of redistribution and recognition in second-wave U.S. feminist theory, as the meaning of "difference" shifted from "gender difference" to "differences among women" and then again to "multiple intersecting differences." This trajectory brought major gains, to be sure, as gender ceased to be viewed in isolation from other axes of subordination; nevetheless, something important was lost: "differences" were assimilated to the model of cultural variations, thereby obscuring differentials rooted in political economy and truncating the scope of justice. Chapter 8, in contrast, examines a laudable effort to expand the scope of justice to encompass both culture and political economy. Titled "Culture, Political Economy, and Difference," it exposes some shortcomings of Iris Marion Young's approach, especially the latter's tendency to evade the hard political questions that arise when we try to pursue redistribution and recognition simultaneously. Chapter 9, "False Antitheses," seeks to integrate the discursive and the normative in the theory of subjectivity. Critiquing the unnecessarily polarized stances of Seyla Benhabib, on the one side, and Judith Butler, on the other, it analyzes what is involved in combining reconstruction and deconstruction, elements of Critical Theory and poststructuralism. Lastly, in chapter 10, "Beyond the Master/Subject Model," I examine Carole Pateman's effort to theorize the ways in which contractual relations modernize, rather than subvert, male dominance. Pateman underestimates, I argue, the degree to which gender inequality is today being transformed by a shift from dyadic relations of mastery and subjection to more impersonal structural mechanisms that are lived through more fluid cultural forms.

In every chapter my guiding aim is this: to *think through* the "postsocialist" condition in hopes of coming out on the other side. To be sure, we cannot now know precisely what lies on that other side. But we can nevertheless resist ideological pressures that would prematurely foreclose the possibilities. Above all, this means refusing the unacceptable either/or choices that "postsocialist" commonsense is currently constructing. The goal should be to open the way for another "postsocialism," one that incorporates what remains unsurpassable in the socialist project with what is compelling and defensible in the politics of recognition.

Notes

1. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
2. Jürgen Habermas, "The New Obscurity and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies," in *Observations on the Spiritual Situation of the Age,* ed. Habermas, trans. Andrew Buchwalter (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984).
3. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
4. As I write this in July 1996, social democracy appears to making a comeback in some countries: witness recent election results in Italy, Poland, and other former communist countries, as well as electoral polls in England.
5. In a special issue on the "Science Wars" (that is, recent debates over cultural studies scholarship about science), *Social Text* published an article by New York University physicist Alan Sokal. (Alan D. Sokal, "Transgressing the Boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantam Gravity," *Social Text,* spring/summer 1996, no. 46–47: 217–252.) Sokal later claimed the article was a parody intended to expose the intellectual vacuity of cultural studies. (See Alan Sokal, "A Physicist Experiments with Cultural Studies," *Lingua Franca,* May/June 1996, pp. 62–64.) Aided in preparing his article by feminist scholars Ruth Rosen and Barbara Epstein, he cast himself as a defender of the "real left" (what I am calling the "social left") against the phony leftism of cultural studies (what I am calling "the cultural left"), which he took *Social Text* to epitomize. In my view, Sokal's hoax was most revealing for the reactions it generated. There was widespread gloating not only on the Right, as was to be expected, but also and more importantly within the social left. (Examples include Katha Pollitt, "Pomolotov Cocktail," *The Nation,* 10 June 1996, p. 9; and Tom Frank, "Textual Reckoning," *In These Times,* 27 May 1996, pp. 22–24.) In my view, the hoax cathected such intense feelings of resentful glee precisely because it crystallized a large, important fault line in the "postsocialist" condition. For a thoughtful analysis of the reaction, see Ellen Willis, "My Sokaled Life," *Village Voice,* 25 June 1996, pp. 22–23.
6. United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1996* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Highlights of the findings are reported by Barbara Crossette, "U.N. Survey Finds World Rich-Poor Gap Widening," *New York Times,* 15 July 1996, p. A4.
7. The reference is to Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995).
8. I mean here to contest the view that opposes "social politics," equated with the politics of class, to "identity politics," equated with the politics of feminism, anti-racism, and gay and lesbian liberation. This view treats identity-oriented currents within the latter movements as the whole story, rendering invisible alternative currents dedicated to righting gender-specific, race-specific, and sex-specific forms of economic injustice that traditional class movements ignored. In addition, it misses the ways in which even the identity-oriented currents are concerned with justice issues, albeit of a different sort. For a discussion of these issues, see chapter 1 of this volume, "From Redistribution to Recognition?"

PART I

REDISTRIBUTION AND RECOGNITION

This page intentionally left blank

1

From Redistribution to Recognition?

Dilemmas of Justice in a "Postsocialist" Age

The "struggle for recognition" is fast becoming the paradigmatic form of political conflict in the late twentieth century. Demands for "recognition of difference" fuel struggles of groups mobilized under the banners of nationality, ethnicity, "race," gender, and sexuality. In these "postsocialist" conflicts, group identity supplants class interest as the chief medium of political mobilization. Cultural domination supplants exploitation as the fundamental injustice. And cultural recognition displaces socioeconomic redistribution as the remedy for injustice and the goal of political struggle.[1]

This is not, of course, the whole story. Struggles for recognition occur in a world of exacerbated material inequality—in income and property ownership; in access to paid work, education, health care, and leisure time; but also, more starkly, in caloric intake and exposure to environmental toxicity, and hence in life expectancy and rates of morbidity and mortality. Material inequality is on the rise in most of the world's countries—in the United States and in China, in Sweden and in India, in Russia and in Brazil. It is also increasing global, most dramatically across the line that divides North from South.

How, then, should we view the eclipse of a socialist imaginary centered on terms such as "interest," "exploitation," and "redistribution"? And what should we make of the rise of a new political imaginary centered on notions of "identity," "difference," "cultural domination," and "recognition"? Does this shift represent a lapse into "false consciousness"? Or does it, rather,

redress the culture-blindness of a materialist paradigm rightfully discredited by the collapse of Soviet communism?

Neither of those two stances is adequate, in my view. Both are too wholesale and unnuanced. Instead of simply endorsing or rejecting all of identity politics *simpliciter,* we should see ourselves as presented with a new intellectual and practical task: that of developing a *critical* theory of recognition, one that identifies and defends only those versions of the cultural politics of difference that can be coherently combined with the social politics of equality.

In formulating this project, I assume that justice today requires *both* redistribution *and* recognition. And I propose to examine the relation between them. In part, this means figuring out how to conceptualize cultural recognition and social equality in forms that support rather than undermine one another. (For there are many competing conceptions of both!) It also means theorizing the ways in which economic disadvantage and cultural disrespect are currently entwined with and support one another. Then, too, it requires clarifying the political dilemmas that arise when we try to combat both those injustices simultaneously.

My larger aim is to connect two political problematics that are currently dissociated from each other, for only by integrating recognition and redistribution can we arrive at a framework that is adequate to the demands of our age. That, however, is far too much to take on here. In what follows, I shall consider only one aspect of the problem: Under what circumstances can a politics of recognition help support a politics of redistribution? And when is it more likely to undermine it? Which of the many varieties of identity politics best synergize with struggles for social equality? And which tend to interfere with the latter?

In addressing these questions, I shall focus on axes of injustice that are simultaneously cultural and socioeconomic, paradigmatically gender and "race." (I shall not say much, in contrast, about ethnicity or nationality.)[2] And I must enter one crucial preliminary caveat: in proposing to assess recognition claims from the standpoint of social equality, I assume that varieties of recognition politics that fail to respect human rights are unacceptable, even if they promote social equality.[3]

Finally, a word about method. In what follows, I shall propose a set of analytical distinctions—for example, cultural injustices versus economic injustices, recognition versus redistribution. In the real world, of course, culture and political economy are always imbricated with each other, and virtually every struggle against injustice, when properly understood, implies demands for both redistribution and recognition. Nevertheless, for heuristic purposes, analytical distinctions are indispensable. Only by abstracting from

the complexities of the real world can we devise a conceptual schema that can illuminate it. Thus, by distinguishing redistribution and recognition analytically, and by exposing their distinctive logics, I aim to clarify—and begin to resolve—some of the central political dilemmas of our age.

My discussion in this chapter proceeds in four parts. In the first section, I conceptualize redistribution and recognition as two analytically distinct paradigms of justice, and I formulate "the redistribution-recognition dilemma." In the second, I distinguish three ideal-typical modes of social collectivity in order to identify those vulnerable to the dilemma. In the third section, I distinguish between "affirmative" and "transformative" remedies for injustice, and I examine their respective logics of collectivity. I use these distinctions in the fourth section to propose a political strategy for integrating recognition claims with redistribution claims with a minimum of mutual interference.

The Redistribution-Recognition Dilemma

Let me begin by noting some complexities of contemporary "postsocialist" political life. With the decentering of class, diverse social movements are mobilized around crosscutting axes of difference. Contesting a range of injustices, their claims overlap and at times conflict. Demands for cultural change intermingle with demands for economic change, both within and among social movements. Increasingly, however, identity-based claims tend to predominate, as prospects for redistribution appear to recede. The result is a complex political field with little programmatic coherence.

To help clarify this situation and the political prospects it presents, I propose to distinguish two broadly conceived, analytically distinct understandings of injustice. The first is socioeconomic injustice, which is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. Examples include exploitation (having the fruits of one's labor appropriated for the benefit of others); economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work or being denied access to income-generating labor altogether), and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living).

Egalitarian theorists have long sought to conceptualize the nature of these socioeconomic injustices. Their accounts include Marx's theory of capitalist exploitation, John Rawls's account of justice as fairness in the choice of principles governing the distribution of "primary goods," Amartya Sen's view that justice requires ensuring that people have equal "capabilities to function," and Ronald Dworkin's view that it requires "equality of resources."[4]

For my purposes here, however, we need not commit ourselves to any one particular theoretical account. We need only subscribe to a rough and general understanding of socioeconomic injustice informed by a commitment to egalitarianism.

The second understanding of injustice is cultural or symbolic. Here injustice is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication. Examples include cultural domination (being subjected to patterns of interpretation and communication that are associated with another culture and are alien and/or hostile to one's own); nonrecognition (being rendered invisible by means of the authoritative representational, communicative, and interpretative practices of one's culture); and disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representations and/or in everyday life interactions).

Some political theorists have recently sought to conceptualize the nature of these cultural or symbolic injustices. Charles Taylor, for example, has drawn on Hegelian notions to argue that

> nonrecognition or misrecognition . . . can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, reduced mode of being. Beyond simple lack of respect, it can inflict a grievous wound, saddling people with crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy but a vital human need.[5]

Likewise, Axel Honneth has argued that

> we owe our integrity . . . to the receipt of approval or recognition from other persons. [Negative concepts such as "insult" or "degradation"] are related to forms of disrespect, to the denial of recognition. [They] are used to characterize a form of behavior that does not represent an injustice solely because it constrains the subjects in their freedom for action or does them harm. Rather, such behavior is injurious because it impairs these persons in their positive understanding of self—an understanding acquired by intersubjective means.[6]

Similar conceptions inform the work of many other critical theorists, including Iris Marion Young and Patricia J. Williams, who do not use the term 'recognition.'[7] Once again, however, it is not necessary here to settle on a particular theoretical account. We need only subscribe to a general and rough understanding of cultural injustice, as distinct from socioeconomic injustice.

Despite the differences between them, both socioeconomic injustice and cultural injustice are pervasive in contemporary societies. Both are rooted in

processes and practices that systematically disadvantage some groups of people vis-à-vis others. Both, consequently, should be remedied.

Of course, this distinction between economic injustice and cultural injustice is analytical. In practice, the two are intertwined. Even the most material economic institutions have a constitutive, irreducible cultural dimension; they are shot through with significations and norms. Conversely, even the most discursive cultural practices have a constitutive, irreducible political-economic dimension; they are underpinned by material supports. Thus, far from occupying two airtight separate spheres, economic injustice and cultural injustice are usually interimbricated so as to reinforce each other dialectically. Cultural norms that are unfairly biased against some are institutionalized in the state and the economy; meanwhile, economic disadvantage impedes equal participation in the making of culture, in public spheres and in everyday life. The result is often a vicious circle of cultural and economic subordination.[8]

Despite these mutual entwinements, I shall continue to distinguish economic injustice and cultural injustice analytically. And I shall also distinguish two correspondingly distinct kinds of remedy. The remedy for economic injustice is political-economic restructuring of some sort. This might involve redistributing income, reorganizing the division of labor, subjecting investment to democratic decision making, or transforming other basic economic structures. Although these various remedies differ importantly from one another, I shall henceforth refer to the whole group of them by the generic term "redistribution."[9] The remedy for cultural injustice, in contrast, is some sort of cultural or symbolic change. This could involve upwardly revaluing disrespected identities and the cultural products of maligned groups. It could also involve recognizing and positively valorizing cultural diversity. More radically still, it could involve the wholesale transformation of societal patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication in ways that would change *everybody's* sense of self.[10] Although these remedies differ importantly from one another, I shall henceforth refer to the whole group of them by the generic term "recognition."

Once again, this distinction between redistributive remedies and recognition remedies is analytical. Redistributive remedies generally presuppose an underlying conception of recognition. For example, some proponents of egalitarian socioeconomic redistribution ground their claims on the "equal moral worth of persons"; thus, they treat economic redistribution as an expression of recognition.[11] Conversely, recognition remedies sometimes presuppose an underlying conception of redistribution. For example, some proponents of multicultural recognition ground their claims on the impera-